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NOTES ON *DANAUS GILIPPUS STRIGOSUS*
(NYMPHALIDAE: DANAINAE) IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Additional key words: Asclepiadaceae, *Asclepias*, milkweed, host plant, distribution, striated queen.

The striated queen, *Danaus gilippus strigosus* (Bates), is a widespread butterfly that breeds throughout much of southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico (Howe 1975); it is common throughout the Colorado Desert in California (Emmel & Emmel 1973). Although adults are found regularly along the Pacific coast of California from Santa Barbara to San Diego and in the adjacent coastal mountains during autumn of most years (Coolidge 1926; Emmel & Emmel 1973), they are considerably less common in the coastal region during the spring and summer (e.g., Orsak 1977). Most late summer and fall records of this species from the coast likely represent adults that have dispersed from the desert; however, some small populations may be established in coastal San Diego County (e.g., Mission Gorge, Otay River Valley) or elsewhere where larval hosts are available (J. Brown pers. comm.). The purposes of this note are to present records of new larval hosts and document the colonization by *D. gilippus* of the coastal region of southern California.

Coolidge (1926) and Emmel and Emmel (1973) reported climbing milkweed, *Sarcostemma hirtellum* (R. Holm) (Asclepiadaceae), as the primary larval host of *D. gilippus* in the desert areas of southern California, and Emmel and Emmel (1973) suggested that purple climbing milkweed, *Sarcostemma cyanchooides* ssp. *hartwegii* (R. Holm), may be used as well. Emmel and Emmel (1973) also reported that larvae of *D. gilippus* have been taken on *Asclepias albicans* (Wats.) and *A. erosa* (Torr.), both of which occur in the Colorado Desert (Munz 1974). Comstock (1927) and Coolidge (1926) reported intro-

duced oleander (*Nerium* sp.) (Apocynaceae) as a larval host plant, but it is highly unlikely that oleander is used on a regular basis.

I collected a single larva of *D. gilippus* on *Asclepias fascicularis* (Dcne.) at each of two locations: 1) near Fort Tejon State Historic Park in the Tehachapi Mountains, Kern County (18 September 1988); and 2) Leo Carrillo State Beach at the western edge of the Santa Monica Mountains about 100 m from the coast, Los Angeles County (2 October 1988). Both larvae were reared to adulthood on their original host plants. The specimens are in the collection of the author. Larvae of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus* L.) are found regularly in the fall feeding on *A. fascicularis* at both of these localities.

David Marriott (pers. comm.) observed a last instar larva of *D. gilippus* on the introduced *Asclepias curvassavica* (L.) near Encinitas in coastal San Diego County (November 1991). He also reported observations (by Maureen Calvert) of pupae on *A. curvassavica* and adults ovipositing on this species in this area for 8 years. Marriott also reported observations (by Tony Leigh) of a last instar larva of *D. gilippus* on *A. fascicularis* at Harbor Lake Regional Park, Harbor City, Los Angeles County (23 September 1984).

In southern California, *D. gilippus* probably is a permanent resident only in the Colorado Desert. Based on host plant availability and observations presented above, this species may occasionally colonize coastal or montane areas following late summer or fall dispersal. The duration of coastal residency may be determined by low temperatures and host plant availability in winter.

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